



**Testimony in Support of SB 439, AN ACT CONCERNING THE
STATE CONTRACTING STANDARDS BOARD AND
REQUIREMENTS FOR PRIVATIZATION CONTRACTS.**

**Submitted by Sal Luciano, Executive Director, Council 4 AFSCME,
March 18, 2016 Before the GAE Committee**

Good afternoon Chairman Cassano, Representative Dutila and members of the GAE Committee.

My name is Sal Luciano. I serve as Executive Director of Council 4 AFSCME, a labor union with 35,000 members in state and local government, boards of education, quasi-governmental agencies and the private sector. I am also an appointed labor representative of the State Contracting Standards Board.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 439. The bill you have raised is a common-sense way to strengthen the State Contracting Standards Board, which to date has not functioned effectively due to issues such as the lack of a membership quorum, insufficient funding and inadequate oversight authority to ensure taxpayers get what they pay for.

We all know that Connecticut faces serious budget challenges. Effective stewardship of our tax dollars is more critical than ever. Our union has long contended that Connecticut has operated with a shadow government of contractors and consultants that's drained hundreds of millions of taxpayer money with little to show in return, other than fattening the wallets of the same contractors and consultants.

Here's an example. Our members are front-line employees at the Department of Motor Vehicles. They're proud of the work they do in service to the public. But their work environment has grown even more difficult since the installation of a failed computerization system. The system was installed by privatized workers of the 3M Corporation out of Minnesota at a cost to state taxpayers of \$26 million. Our workers warned the system was doomed to fail, but nobody listened.

We saw what happened with this latest example of reckless outsourcing. Outsourcing state employee computer work has yielded shoddy results, unbelievably long and tortuous waits for the public, the unfair fining of members of the driving public, towing of their cars and a stain on Connecticut state government. Ironically, the Malloy administration supports privatizing more DMV functions.

When outsourcing and contracting out fail, less money flows to the local economy and more money is routed to for-profit corporations that cut corners because they are not held accountable. It's time to put the brakes on wasteful contracting across Connecticut state agencies, including its higher education institutions. One way to do this is to pass SB 439 and empower the Contracting Standards Board to do the job it's supposed to do on behalf of state taxpayers. Giving us the tools to succeed will be the difference between a legacy of reckless contracting and responsible contracting.

Thank you. I would be happy to answer any questions.